

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PLO LE US
SUBJ: SALAH KHALAF CRITICIZES PRESIDENT CARTER

1. AT A "MARTYR'S DAY" RALLY IN BEIRUT ON JANUARY 7, PLO OFFICIAL SALAH KHALAF MADE THE PLO'S FIRST PUBLIC ATTACK ON PRESIDENT CARTER PERSONALLY. (PLO OFFICIALS HAVE OFTEN STRONGLY ATTACKED AMERICAN POLICIES UNDER THE CURRENT U.S. ADMINISTRATION, BUT HAVE ALWAYS REFRAINED FROM DIRECT ATTACK ON THE PRESIDENT AT LEAST AS REPORTED BY OFFICIAL PLO MEDIA.)

2. AS REPORTED BY WAFA, KHALAF SAID: "WHILE THE USA IS AFFLICTED BY THOSE WHO CHANGE THEIR MINDS EVERY MOMENT, WITH CARTER AT THEIR HEAD, OUR PEOPLE AND OUR NATION NEVER CHANGE THEIR MINDS. AND TO THOSE WHO COMPROMISE AND WHO MAKE STATEMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT 'THE PLO EXISTS AND DOES NOT EXIST; THE PLO IS REPRESENTATIVE AND NOT REPRESENTATIVE,' I SAY THAT OUR PEOPLE RECOGNIZE ONLY THE PLO AS THEIR SOLE REPRESENTATIVE. IF CARTER AND AMATEURS LIKE HIM ARE TRYING TO PLAY WITH THE DESTINY OF THE PEOPLES; IF THE SHAH OF IRAN CONSIDERS THAT THE FUTURE OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA SHOULD BE LINKED TO JORDAN; AND IF THIS

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OR THAT LEADER TRIES TO CHANGE HIS MIND EVERY DAY; WE TELL THEM THAT WE ARE NOT READY TO COMPROMISE." THE ENGLISH DAILY IKE (BUT NOT WAFA) ALSO QUOTED KHALAF AS CALLING PRESIDENT CARTER "AMERICA'S WEAKEST PRESIDENT."

3. SALAH KHALAF INDICATED THAT THE PLO NEVERTHELESS STILL DID NOT WISH TO BURN ALL ITS BRIDGES WITH

THE UNITED STATES OR EGYPT. HE SAID THAT "OUR OCCASIONAL SILENCE DOES NOT MEAN WEAKNESS OR PASSIVITY BUT MEANS RATHER THAT WE WANT TO LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN FOR THOSE WHO ARE MAKING CONCESSIONS AT THE EXPENSE OF THIS (PALESTINIAN) NATION IN CASE THEY GO BACK ON THEIR ACTIONS."

4. FINALLY, KHALAF MADE PLAIN THAT FEDERATION WITH JORDAN AT THIS STAGE WAS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO THE PLO. HE SAID: "THE PEOPLE OF PALESTINE ARE DETERMINED TO RETURN; THEY WILL NOT ACCEPT TO BE RULED EXCEPT BY PALESTINIANS." (PLO OFFICIALS HAVE PUBLICLY ASSERTED BEFORE THAT THE PLO MIGHT CONSIDER SOME SORT OF FEDERATION WITH JORDAN, BUT ONLY AFTER ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE.)

PARKER

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